(3) The present *tharavila* of Rs. 25 and assessment of 15 fanams per acre should be cancelled.

(4) The assessment for *cherikals* should not exceed 5 fanams an acre.

(5) All arable lands available should be registered to the subjects of the State, and no further reservation of forests should be made.

(6) Such lands within reserved forests as could be registered without detriment to forest interests should be assigned to the people.

(7) Land at the rate of 5 acres per head should be registered to the really landless poor, free of acreage value and arrears of assessment.

(8) 200 acres of land should be set apart as grazing grounds between the 24th and 30th milestones on the Kottayam–Kumili road.

(9) A veterinary hospital should be established at Kanjirappalli.

(10) Lower Grade Elementary Schools should be opened in the villages of Cheruvalli, Chenapadi, Edakunnam and Erumeli.

(11) As agriculture suffered for want of proper communications, the following village roads should be made cartable:—

(*a*) the road from the Ponkunnam market to the 5th mile of the Kanjirappalli–Kunnumbhagom road *via* Cheruvalli and Chirakadavu ;

(*b*) the road from the 4th mile of the Kunnumbhagom road to Erumeli *via* Chenapadi ;

(*c*) the road from the 24th mile of the Kottayam–Kumili road to the Meenachil road *via* Kanjirappalli, Thampalakad, Panamattom and Elikulam; and

(*d*) the road from the 26th mile of the Kottayam–Kumili road to Edakunnam.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

8. The desirability of limiting the grant of Sirkar unassessed waste lands on permanent tenure to foreign capitalists and of restricting the transfer of lands by the natives of the country to such capitalists.

Mr. C. Sankara Menon, B. A., B. L., (Member, T. I. C., Quilon) said that his submission was that, in the interests of the people of the State, it was desirable to restrict the assignment of waste lands at the disposal of the Government on permanent tenures to persons who were not *bona fide* subjects. Mr. Padmanabha Pillai had already represented certain aspects of the question and he had only to add a few more points in connection with it. He explained the limitations under which the people had to work and examined the growth of population from 1875 to 1911. In the first two decades, the increases were 3 and 5 per cent, while, during the last two, the figures rose to 15 and 16 per cent respectively. The density per square mile also rose from 462 in 1875 to 686 in 1911. Of the arable area available, only 25 per cent remained to be brought under the plough. The condition of the ryots was such that, in spite of the efforts of the Director of Agriculture, intensive cultivation had not made any progress, nor was it likely to do so in the future. The widening of the limits of cultivation was the only course open to them. In the neighbouring State of Cochin, where the density was even greater and the arable area less, the result was that the people were converting paddy lands into gardens and homesteads. The Travancore ryots were doing the same. They were reclaiming the backwaters, but even that they were precluded from doing successfully, owing to the heavy cost of such reclamations and also the prohibitive *tharavila* levied by the Government. Replying to the Dewan, the Member said that the cost of reclamation was, according to a recent judicial finding, Rs. 35 per cent. It might be slightly lower where the depth of the backwater was less. He feared that, in another three or four decades, there would not be lands even to squat on.

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Another evil was that, owing to the inability of the people to compete with the cheap machine-made foreign articles, the indigenous industries in the country had been strangled to death. Further, over 50,000 acres of land had already been assigned away to European planters for the cultivation of rubber alone. From coffee, tea and rubber, the European planter was now going to cocoanuts, and he was in the running for cocoanut gardens. That circumstance was causing grave apprehension in the minds of the thinking public. The restriction of the acquisition of property by Europeans and Americans had been removed and the Government were freely assigning lands to them. If that policy were continued, the subjects of the State were certain to be defeated in the competition in the production of the only article of subsistence, the cocoanut, and the country must necessarily be the poorer for it.

The Member next dealt with the present method of registering lands to the natives and the facilities offered to the Europeans and he observed that the attitude of the Government was detrimental to the interests of the people. He explained how the fixing of the minimum rates of *tharavila* and assessment was an oppressive weapon in the hands of the Revenue subordinates and how it was also a source of loss to the Government. He was glad that, with the spread of education, even the educated people were awakening to a sense of the need for developing the natural resources of the country. But it would be some time before they were trained in the western methods of carrying on business and understood the value of co-operation; and if, before that time, all the available land in the country were to pass into the hands of the foreign capitalists, there was no hope of salvation for the ryots of the State. It was therefore the duty of the Government to give as much facility as possible for developing the resources of the State and to discourage the investment of foreign capital in landed estates Even in that matter, all that was possible was to take care of the future. It might be thought inexpedient to enact a law prohibiting persons other than *bona fide* subjects of His Highness from acquiring lands in the State, though there were instances of such paternal legislation even in British India. The Member therefore submitted the following suggestions for the favourable consideration of the Government :—

(1) An actual survey of the lands now available for assignment should be made and they should be divided into separate blocks of not less than 10 acres in extent.

(2) No land should be assigned away before the forest growth thereon was removed by the Forest Department.

(3) The Sirkar should grant lands to *bona fide* subjects of His Highness the Maha Raja at a *fixed* acreage value, and no discretion should be given to subordinate officers to fix the *tharavila*.

(4) The concessions of payment in instalments &c., now granted to the natives of the country for registry of lands, in the Nedumangad taluk, should be extended throughout the State.

(5) Foreign capitalists should not be granted lands within the State except on redeemable lease for 25 or 30 years at the most, and that too should be done only in public auction held after due notification of the same. If the highest bidder be a foreigner, the concessions granted to natives should not be given to him.

(6) The sale of lands by the people of the State to foreigners should be prohibited by imposing on the vendor the forfeiture of the above concessions. In the case of new registries, there should be a condition in the registry that the land should not be transferred to a non-Travancorean.

In reply to the Dewan, the Member said that, if an enactment was expedient, he would prohibit all alienations of lands by Travancoreans to non-Travancoreans. He was not for making any distinction between non-Travancoreans, who were natives of other parts of India, and others, but he would apply the prohibition to both set of people. The system of *ottivilakkom* under which an assessment was charged on *jenmom* lands alienated was tantamount to a prohibition of alienation of the lands. He prayed

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for a similar measure to secure the object in view, before it became too late. He also presented a memorial on the subject signed by 51 Members of the Assembly.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

9. Hardships on account of the high rate of tharavila and assessment on puthuval and poramboke lands in the taluk.

Mr. Sankaran Krishnan (Member, Nedumangad taluk) observed that the applications for waste lands in the taluk were either from the wealthy foreigners or from the half-starved poor ryots of the State. He would confine his attention to the latter. The bulk of the lands in the taluk had already been registered during and after the settlement without any *tharavila* and for a nominal assessment of one fanam per acre. The lands that remained were very inferior in quality, fit only for tapioca cultivation and the like. They were not suitable even for cocoanut cultivation. On such lands the Government had, by their recent orders, been raising the *tharavila* and assessment. The *tharavila* was first raised to 1 Re. and later on to Rs. 3 per acre, and the assessment to 5 fanams per acre. By a still later G. O., even those rates were further raised to Rs. 15 and rupee one per acre respectively. The reason alleged was that such a course was rendered necessary by the large expenditure on the re-survey of the taluk. The Member observed that the re-survey was necessitated by the want of proper supervision at the original survey, and he contended that the negligence of the Government officials could not be rightly charged to the poor ryots. Quite recently, the Dewan Peishkar was demanding a *tharavila* of Rs. 25 per acre on some lands in the taluk. The result of it all was that the poor landless ryots had to give up all hopes of getting any land. He therefore requested that the lands in the taluk should be registered to the poor, charging a *tharavila* of one or two rupees per acre and an assessment of one fanam per acre. In the long run, the Government could get an assessment of 50 fanams per acre from the same land, when they were planted up.

Mr. Gangadharan Ramavarman Thirumulpad (Member, Sherthallai taluk) observed that, for the *kayal* and canal reclamations and other waste lands, *tharavila* ranging from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1,000 per acre was being recovered. He then referred to the several G. O's. issued raising the *tharavila* for reclamations and ordinary waste lands, and pointed out that it was probably in the free exercise of the *discretion* vested in the Peishkars of fixing the *tharavila* at rates higher than the minimum that such oppressive amounts came to be realised. He said that the cost of reclamation was very heavy and that the nature of the waste lands in the taluk was sandy. He therefore prayed that *tharavila* should be fixed at Rs. 3 per acre for ordinary *puthuvals* and at Rs. 15 per acre for the *kayal* reclamations.

Mr. K. Velayudhan Pillai (Member, Changanacherri taluk) said that formerly no *tharavila* was levied in the State for the registry of lands. Dewan Sir. T. Madhava Rao started a *tharavila* of one rupee per acre and that had been in force for forty years. The people never felt it as a burden. During the last seven years, the *tharavila* had been raised from time to time. A *tharavila* of Rs. 25 per acre was at first fixed for *kayal* reclamations; that was then reduced to Rs. 15 per acre; but when the time for registry came, it was raised to Rs. 30 per acre. In many places, a *tharavila* of Rs. 5 and Rs. 10 per cent and even more was being recovered according to the whims and caprices of the lower officers. All that was due to the fixing of *minimum* rates and leaving a vague discretion with the officers. Under such circumstances, the ryots of the country drew back and the lands were speedily passing into the hands of foreigners. The officers of Government were also partial to the latter. If the policy were continued for some time longer, he felt sure that the Europeans and other non-Travancoreans would become the landed proprietors, and the subjects of the State their dependants. For the above reasons, he requested that a light and uniform *tharavila* be fixed for the several kinds of land and made applicable throughout the State.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

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